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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Office of Research and Reports

ORR Comments on G-2 Contribution to NIE-47 "Communist Intentions and Capabilities in Asia" CIA/RR IP-266

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FOREWORD

Attention is called to the fact that data available in Washington on the traffic capacity of the Trans-Siberian railroad and of the portion of such capacity available for movement of supplies to China and Korea are not fully satisfactory. This fact is recognized by the various agencies. Steps are already being taken through the EIC to acquire better data and to make a more thorough evaluation of information available. In addition, CIA is arranging to obtain [redacted] 25X1X
25X1X [redacted] data relating to the volume of traffic and the capacity of the Manchurian railroads and of the connecting Trans-Siberian. The comments presented herein must therefore be taken as tentative and subject to possible major revision in the future.

CIA/RR IP-266

ORR COMMENTS ON THE G-2 CONTRIBUTION TO NIE-47

1. Conclusions.

It is believed that the portion of the Trans-Siberian railroad's capacity estimated by G-2 as available for movement of traffic to China and Korea (beyond the USSR's minimum military, railroad operational, and civilian needs) should be raised from 6,000 to approximately 9,000 metric tons per day. Under certain circumstances, moreover, this tonnage could be increased to 11,000 metric tons per day. The Manchurian railroads, however, probably could not accept so great a load on a continuing basis.

2. Discussion.

a. Introduction.

The G-2 contribution to NIE-47 does not present a breakdown of the types of traffic included in the total number of trains per day required for civilian purposes, for railroad maintenance, or for support of the Soviet armed forces. It must therefore be assumed that these figures have been arrived at after consideration of such factors as local and through civilian passenger trains, movement of railroad fuel supplies, and trains for normal troop unit movements and replacements.

b. Civilian Needs and Railroad Requirements.

Little is known of the actual traffic now being moved over the Trans-Siberian railroad for civilian needs and railroad requirements. Current estimates are therefore influenced by information obtained from the Soviets during World War II (JIB, 3/59, Notes on Soviet Far East, August 1948, Secret) that 10 trains each way per day were required for civilian purposes, of which 5 trains were required for railroad maintenance and operational needs. The G-2 estimate, while tentatively accepting the figure of 10 trains for civilian purposes (see page 8), apparently overlooks the inclusion of railroad maintenance traffic. G-2 indicates, furthermore, that "a more reasonable estimate of civilian requirements is 14 trains." G-2 estimates 2,700 metric tons per day in addition (about 4 trains per day) for railroad maintenance (see page 9). On this basis, a total of 18 trains per day for civilian purposes and railroad requirements would be needed. Because of the apparent double counting of railroad requirements, the G-2 estimate of 18 trains should be reduced by 4.

ORR accepts the G-2 estimate of 10 trains (7,500 metric tons capacity) per day for civilian purposes with some reserve, but believes that this figure should not be raised to 14 trains (10,500 metric tons capacity) except on the basis of a careful study of per capita consumption applied to the present population in the areas served by the Trans-Siberian railroad. There is no indication that such a study has been made.

In view of the above considerations, ORR modifies the G-2 estimate of the distribution of Trans-Siberian capacity approximately as follows:

	Number of Trains	Metric Tons
Practical Capacity per Day in Each Direction (750 Metric Tons per Train)	30	22,500
Distribution of Capacity a/		
Civilian Purposes	10	7,500
Railroad Maintenance	4	3,000 (approx.)
Military Requirements for Soviet Forces	4	3,000 (approx.)
Available for China	12	9,000
Total	30	22,500

a. See paragraph c, below.

c. Air and Naval Requirements.

The G-2 paper assumes that air and naval requirements consume the average daily tonnage transported by sea and air (see page 9) and concludes (see page 7, last paragraph) that it is unlikely that a significant increase in the flow of supplies to China or Korea can now occur over the Trans-Siberian railroad except for short periods of time, without cutting seriously into important Soviet military and civilian traffic.

ORR believes, however, that present Soviet military and civilian traffic could be maintained and that the traffic to China could be increased if the estimated 2,000 metric tons per day now being shipped by sea to the Far East were doubled. ORR estimates that the USSR is capable of this additional sea lift. Presumably this not only would provide for the air and naval requirements but also would relieve the Trans-Siberian railroad of 2,000 metric tons per day now being transported in support of civil and military activities. This additional tonnage if assigned to China would increase the logistical support to the Chinese Communists from 9,000 to 11,000 metric tons per day.

d. Manchurian Railroad Capacity.

It should be pointed out that a recent G-2 estimate of the capacity of the railroads in Manchuria (Manchouli-Harbin plus Suifenho-Harbin) is a minimum of 6,000 metric tons. This is based on a conservative estimate, however, of only 500 net tons per train as compared with 750 net tons per train on the Trans-Siberian railroad. The combined tonnage capabilities of the Manchurian rail lines to the Soviet border, according to Japanese operating experience,* are sufficient to handle 9,000 metric tons per day but probably are insufficient, due to shortage of rolling stock, to handle 11,000 metric tons per day on a continuing basis.

* Far East Command Terrain Study No. 1, Manchuria.

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